

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 30

47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2006

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, IN COOPERATION WITH THE
PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF
REQUIRING VISION, HEARING AND DENTAL SCREENING IN SCHOOLS.

WHEREAS, vision impairment in young children can result in
permanent loss of vision if not detected and treated before the
age of six; and

WHEREAS, national studies indicate that undiagnosed vision
impairments are highest in children who live in poverty and who
are members of minority populations; and

WHEREAS, vision screening is known to be highly effective
in detecting the leading causes of visual impairment in young
children; and

WHEREAS, a significant cost savings can be realized with
vision screening using the American association of pediatrics

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1 guidelines as compared to routine eye examinations; and

2 WHEREAS, vision screening is performed in many New Mexico
3 schools, but is not standardized or required for all school-age
4 children starting at preschool; and

5 WHEREAS, more than a million children in the United States
6 have a hearing loss that can significantly affect speech and
7 language development and education; and

8 WHEREAS, the state recognizes that even minimal hearing
9 loss can affect the development, communication and health of
10 children and their subsequent educational, vocational and
11 social opportunities; and

12 WHEREAS, according to the federal centers for disease
13 control, tooth decay remains one of the most common diseases of
14 childhood; and

15 WHEREAS, more than half of all children between ages five
16 and nine have had at least one cavity or filling; and

17 WHEREAS, according to the American academy of pediatrics,
18 recommendations for preventive pediatric care, objective
19 screenings for vision and hearing should be performed
20 periodically on all infants and children; and

21 WHEREAS, providing vision, hearing and dental screening in
22 school supports the "one-stop shopping" concept and will help
23 families in rural and frontier areas of the state to access
24 these services;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE

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1 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of health, in
2 cooperation with the public education department, be requested
3 to study the feasibility of requiring vision, hearing and
4 dental screening in schools; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study identify
6 opportunities to expand and standardize routine early vision,
7 hearing and dental screening for infants and young children in
8 New Mexico; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study determine how to
10 standardize and implement training on vision, hearing and
11 dental screening for all school nurses; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study recommend a process
13 for referral of all children who fail any of the three
14 screenings at any age to the appropriate professional and
15 develop a standardized referral form to be used by school
16 nurses for this purpose; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the findings of this study be
18 presented to the legislative health and human services
19 committee at its November 2006 meeting; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
21 sent to the secretary of health and the secretary of public
22 education.